

7 October 1964

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: NRO ExCom Meeting, Tuesday, 6 October, 4 p.m.,
in Secretary Vance's Office

1. Present were Mr. McCone, Secretary Vance, General Carter, Dr. Fubini, and Dr. McMillan.

2. Mr. Vance opened the meeting by reporting that as a result of General Carter's telephone call to him in regard to CORONA systems integration contracting on the West Coast, he had researched his records and could see where there had been a misunderstanding. He said that his previous discussions and agreements had been concerned with the payload contracting with Itek, Fairchild, General Electric, and Lockheed and that these should remain under the CIA. He stated that he had not made any agreements as to systems engineering or systems integration contracts with Lockheed and it was his position that these should be transferred to the Air Force.

3. Mr. McCone stated that in connection with prior agreements on the CIA CORONA organization on the West Coast, he had prepared a paper indicating his concept of the organization. (Copies of the paper were given to Mr. Vance, Dr. Fubini, and Dr. McMillan.) Mr. McCone then read the paper in its entirety.

4. Dr. McMillan pointed out that since the Aerospace contract for overall systems management had now been signed, it was essential that the systems integration contract with Lockheed be transferred to the Air Force so that General Greer would have total responsibility for technical direction of the program. Mr. McCone, in response to a question by Mr. Vance, stated that responsibility for the CORONA program rested with General Greer. Also, that [redacted] the West Coast would

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NRO review(s) completed.

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be responsible to, as well as responsive to, General Greer and would work under his guidance. Mr. McCone stated that there was no doubt as to who was in charge of the overall program and this was Greer, and this included command as well as technical direction of the total program. Mr. McCone stated that his concept was as contained in the paper; i. e., [] and his people would continue all of the contracts which they previously and currently had in accordance with the chart attached to his letter. This would include the systems integration contract presently under discussion. These contracts would all be administered and technically supervised by [] and his people would have direct access to Aerospace and the recommendations and findings of [] unit, as well as Aerospace and [] would all be discussed, adjudicated, and coordinated in the CORONA Coordinating Committee or Configuration Control Board or whatever General Greer chose to call his advisory group. There would be a cross flow of information, discussion, and action and reaction between all of the CIA activities and the Air Force activities but that the command decisions would be made by Greer who would look to the Configuration Control Board for advice. Dr. McMillan pointed out that, to the best of his knowledge, the sole point of contact designated to all contractors in the CORONA program was the program's manager [] who was Colonel Herran. General Carter stated that this had previously been [] under Colonel Battle who was an Air Force officer seconded to the CIA and who had been the technical director for the CIA. General Carter stated that this had been transferred by General Greer to the Air Force through reorganization procedures on the West Coast.

5. Dr. Fubini pointed out that even though [] had no satellite or rocket experience, he was known as a thoroughly capable man, a good administrator, and had a fine reputation and Dr. Fubini supported his appointment. There was no further discussion of his capabilities and copies of his biographical sketch were given to Fubini, McMillan, and Vance.

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25X1 Mr. McCone pointed out that once this matter had been agreed, Dr. McMillan, General Carter, and [] should go out to the West Coast, sit down with General Greer and make it abundantly clear to all concerned exactly how the program was to be administered. Mr. McCone stated that he was prepared to send [] at once and to augment his staff as indicated in his letter but he was not going to waste this sort of talent on the West Coast unless it was clearly understood just what the organizational procedures would be. [] would have charge of all CIA activities in the CORONA program and would retain the Lockheed systems integration contract. He would report to and be directly responsible to General Greer. All of the integrating activities between the payload and launch and recovery procedures would be coordinated across the boards as necessary and would be considered by the Configuration Control Board as necessary. This Board would act in an advisory capacity to General Greer who in turn had the final authority for decisions. Dr. McMillan reiterated that this made General Greer the technical director of the entire CORONA program and Mr. McCone and General Carter agreed. (N. B. This point is made a matter of specific record because it bears directly on the responsibility for technical direction [] -- the CIA position being that technical direction must remain in the Government -- McCone, Vance, and Fubini all agreed that Greer had technical direction of CORONA since he had full responsibility and was in command of the project.) 25X

6. It was not formally agreed that Mr. McCone's letter to Mr. Vance was approved, but the indications were clear that it was acceptable to DOD and we should press for a rapid response.

25X1 7. Mr. Vance then brought up his difficulties with the technical direction of the [] program and reviewed the bidding as he saw it. He stated that we had not conformed to his agreement on technical direction of the program and that therefore he did not consider [] as being an NRO program. 25X1 Mr. McCone reviewed the bidding in detail as he saw it and as it conformed to the facts. Mr. McCone stated his feeling that the

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25X1 question of technical direction was a matter of semantics. He referred to his memorandum of August 14th, General Carter's memorandum of August 27th, and Dr. Wheelon's approved plan of implementation dated August 31st. He said all of these conformed to agreements previously made. Mr. McCone stated that he had personally read the proposed contracting procedure for the implementation of technical direction and that it conformed in every respect to his prior agreements and certainly to any concept of responsibility of the Government. McMillan pointed out that [] was not being operated in accordance with his agreements, that Wheelon had failed to comply with McMillan's instructions, that McMillan had not had an opportunity to review the contracts and work statements, and that as far as he was concerned, this was not an NRO program. Dr. Fubini repeated these statements and said it was an unsatisfactory working relationship as far as he was concerned. General Carter pointed out that this was a CIA program under NRO aegis as agreed at prior meetings. He stated that Mr. Vance's only objection to the August 31 statement of procedures was on technical direction and that this was well on the tracks in accordance with Governmental procedures and responsibilities as well as authorities. He stated that Mr. Vance had not objected to all the other procedures which Mr. McCone had approved.

8. Dr. McMillan stated that the manner in which Wheelon was letting contracts without McMillan's prior approval prevented McMillan from conducting an objective review as well as injecting his own thinking into the projects. He added that this procedure also prevented the contractors from contributing anything such as new ideas into the program. He stated that this was a Wheelon project and that the contractors were inhibited in adding their talented contributions and thoughts to the basic idea.

25X1 9. General Carter stated that it was incomprehensible to him how five high-paid Government officials could be continually arguing about the precise management arrangements for a [] program when other programs costing hundreds of millions of dollars within the NRO had little if any supervision at all, especially from these officials.

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10. Mr. McCone stated his complete and total disgust with the entire NRO arrangements and especially with the arrogant intransigence of Dr. McMillan. He said he could not see how NRO could ever work properly with Dr. McMillan in charge of the program. He stated that Dr. McMillan's activities throughout their association had bordered on deceit in many instances. Dr. McMillan interjected that Mr. McCone had said this before in protecting his fair-haired boy Wheelon, and that Dr. McMillan had asked for such statements in writing. Mr. McCone stated that as far as he was concerned, the Department of Defense had reneged on the basic NRO agreement as well as subsequent agreements he had made in good faith with Vance, Fubini, and McMillan and that he, Mr. McCone, was thoroughly fed up with the whole procedure. There was no further comment and the subject was changed.

11. Mr. McCone distributed copies of the weekly SKYLARK report but no discussion ensued.

12. General Carter asked Dr. McMillan's assistance in getting some of the new fast film from Eastman Kodak so that the Itek people could work on it in connection with [] General Carter stated that Itek had been unable to get any of the film from Eastman Kodak and that it could have a very direct bearing on

[] He pointed out that [] [] depended in large measure on this fast film which was alleged to be 60% faster than anything presently in existence and perhaps might even have a factor of two to four times as great. He said while he could understand some reluctance on the part of Eastman Kodak because of proprietary interests, it should be noted that Itek is not in the film manufacturing business and that there could well be some other reason for failing to provide the film. Dr. McMillan stated that he was sure the only reason was that the film was not available in sufficient quantity but that he would look into it and see what could be done.

13. General Carter brought up the problem of studying SKYLARK vulnerability. Dr. McMillan stated that Purcell had

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agreed to the radar cross section membership of the committee, to include Garwin, and that McMillan had already contacted Parangosky and it seemed to be well on the tracks. I proposed that we have an overall vulnerability study at the colonel level to be followed by a presentation to senior officers such as Powers and others. It was agreed that Colonel Ledford would chair such a panel immediately and select the membership across the board of those people best qualified to look at the matter from the technical (air defense, deception, countermeasures, flight plans, etc.) level. Presentation would then be made to senior people such as General Powers, General Gerhart, General Sweeney, and perhaps the Joint Chiefs of Staff, to get the military completely on board. The same presentation would then be given to NRO ExCom and the 303 Committee.

14. The meeting then broke up in general disarray.

MSC/blp

Marshall S. Carter
Lieutenant General, USA
Deputy Director

MSC:blp

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